TEMPLE PLACE, 27th October, 1845.

MY DEAR SIR, —

OUR conversation, the other day, respecting the Athenæum, has revived a train of thought on the general subject of that institution, its nature, and *the right mode of administering it*, which has formerly passed through my mind, when I have speculated upon it merely as a humble member of the literary community of New England, and lately as a citizen of Boston. The view I have been in the habit of taking, I know, is far from being peculiar to me; but it is, I apprehend, not so generally entertained as could be wished, — at least, it has not been acted upon to the extent I have supposed possible, and highly proper. If I had ever had the right which proprietorship may be supposed to give, I should, before now, have expressed my opinion with urgency, from an impulse of public spirit. As it is, you will please to consider what I now say as a sort of *confession of faith*, should the matter ever have more of a personal relation to myself.

I. The Athenæum contains a great *public library*. This is no longer, if it ever were so, merely a "social library," in the usual sense of the term, for the exclusive benefit of the shareholders. Such, probably, was not the idea of the more enlightened among its founders; such could hardly have been the idea of those who from time to time have made donations of books, or of those larger *benefactors* to whom that name is commonly restricted. They meant the community. I regard the shareholders, and doubtless the majority of them regard themselves, as *donors* to the amount of their subscriptions, — with certain consequent privileges, it is true, — and also as *trustees* for the present public and for posterity. With this liberal view, I suppose many of the recently created shares were taken.

Since the establishment of the Lowell Lectures, and the opening of the Athenæum to any one for ten dollars a year, I have looked upon the two institutions as fitting counterparts to each other. The philosophical curiosity, and love of intellectual pursuits, awakened by the one, — and not much more can be expected from oral popular lectures, — should find their appropriate aliment and fruition in the books of the other. The two certainly constitute one of the most precious parts of the name and fame of Boston.

II. The Athenæum contains a repository of the Fine Arts; and, as to this branch, by its exhibitions it professedly seeks the whole public. Should not the other branch of the institution be made to incline as much as possible in the same direction?

III. We have, then, in Boston a great Public Library, — a magazine of mind, —

> "Mente, ...
> Delle cose *custode* e *dispensiera*."

How shall it be administered? The poet suggests the aptest division of this topic.

1. Its treasures should be *guarded* from age to age with scrupulous care. The beauty of order should pervade their arrangement. The books should be kept in perfect condition as to their binding; and the appropriate binding and lettering of books often involve knowledge and taste enough to bring them within the outer circle of the fine arts. The custodian should have a *respect* for books, and seek, by his example, to inspire others with it. Books in the shops are manufactures, merchandise, — and cost so much. In a fair library, good books are shrines, oracles, — great minds marshalled in glorious companies, uttering the wisdom of past ages, or of an age that will soon be past.

My temperament is not eminently poetical, and I have had much to do with the mechanical manufacture of *volumes;* but I honor the man whose mind readily transmutes a goodly *book* into an *author*. I shall never forget the awe, the emotion, akin to the sublime, with which, when declining day had left me in dim twilight in the old Library at Cambridge, I have passed along by the alcoves, as if in the immediate presence of the illustrious dead; and when, on some rare occasion, I have gone alone, late in the evening, to seek a book, with no light but the halo around saints and sages, the feeling was almost overpowering. Had I been one whom we wot of, you would long since have heard another solemn and tender "Voice of the Night."

All this means only, that a library is a *sanctum;* and whatever relates to the *keeping* of the books, and the preservation of due quiet, should be *the subject of precise rules*, which, in *the most courteous spirit*, should be enforced when necessary; and any odium arising therefrom in the minds of unreasonable people should be assumed by the Trustees, to whom the Librarian is immediately responsible. But odium will be slow to arise, if I am right as to the moral effect to be expected from what I shall next speak of, which, I am alarmed to say, is the main point of this unconscionable epistle. But I will be brief, and, omitting all mention of exact catalogues and similar appliances of the first necessity, I come to —

2. The duties of a Librarian as the *dispenser* of a great Library. The office of *custodian* has, so far as I know, always been satisfactorily performed at the Athenæum. Not so, I believe, the other branch of a Librarian's duty. By *dispensing*, I am far from meaning only the finding of the particular volumes asked for, or the recording of the titles of such as are borrowed. I mean quite another ability in the Librarian, — an ability to "bring forth, out of the treasure" committed to him, "things new and old." He should be passably skilled in ancient and modern languages; should be acquainted with the history of literature; should know the external history of books, and have some notion of their contents, understanding at least their scope and bearing, so as to be able readily to follow out subjects, and to put inquirers upon the right track. To many, the very multitude of books is confusing, and days of research are lost in a wrong direction, which a few words from an intelligent Librarian might at once prevent. If I may allude to my own experience, he will account it a great privilege to abridge the labor of superior minds, whose time is precious to the public, by his *local* knowledge, as I may call it; and he will delight to point younger persons to the best books on any subject in a course of reading; thus aiding the two classes, — consulters and regular readers. With the latter this city abounds, or should be made to

In confirmation of some of the preceding remarks, I may be permitted to add, that, more than twenty years ago, I had some agency in urging successfully upon the corporation of Harvard College the laws (which I was to execute), throwing open the Library to all comers, with the implied assurance of welcome and aid. Among the good consequences of this change of system, may be fairly reckoned, in a great degree at least, the increased research on the part of many of our authors of all sects, with an increasing sense of its importance, and hence more thoroughness in their works; — a desire to enlarge the apparatus which had proved so useful to them, and grateful acknowledgments borne out by donations of books; — in fine, whatever dissatisfaction may at any moment have been expressed in relation to other parts of the University, unmingled blessings upon *the Library.*

IV. The Athenæum is to be notably increased within no long period. How, or from what source, I know not.* But it is hardly to be believed, that the end of opening new and larger halls will be only a display of empty shelves. Such a result would be unprecedented in this community. Boston is pledged to the contrary.

* N.B. — The Bromfield Fund was not then dreamed of.

Now, the judicious increase of a public library is a grave study. Completeness is to be aimed at in some departments more than in others, at least sooner than in others. What *are* the departments of learning? What is *completeness* in regard to them? The Librarian should, at all events, be able to *understand* the answer to these questions; and he should, moreover, have a notion of the contents of the other learned libraries in the neighborhood, that all may, to a certain extent, conspire to produce in the aggregate a completeness which no one of them can hope very soon to attain for itself. Each may well be distinguished by some peculiar features, as the Athenæum now is by works on the arts. Again, it is far from being true that the latest edition of a book is the best.* But all may be summed up in this, that Bibliography is no mean science.

* A pregnant instance of this just occurs to me. The latest edition of Lord Bacon's Works (an American one), "complete" on the titlepage, omits his "De Augmentis Scientiarum," his maturest and perhaps largest production (the growth of twenty years, and of which the author fondly says, "I think it will live and be *a citizen of the world*)," under the preposterous idea, founded only on the similarity of the titles, that it is merely a Latin translation of his earlier, brief "Advancement of Learning," in *two* books; while, in fact, it consists of *nine* books, being "enlarged," as Bacon expresses it, "almost to a *new work*." Yet the preface of the publishers ventures to hope that their edition "will find its way into every *well-selected* library in our country;" and probably before this time it has become *the* Bacon of most College Libraries in the United States, — a "complete" Virgil without the Georgics!

V. If the Librarian has also in his province the works of art, then he should not be ignorant of the history of art, its ancient monuments and modern masterpieces. The wider has been his

observation of other collections, and the more cultivated his taste, the better. If he need not have the artist's faculty, yet neither is the guardian of ideal beauty like the Sultan's Nubian, qualified for his trust by constitutional indifference towards the subjects of it.

With works of art may be classed coins and medals, though a far higher interest belongs to them, considered as the subjects of the Science of Numismatics, a study at once elegant and useful. Of *ancient* manuscripts, rare even in Europe, we shall probably continue to see next to none on these western shores. They are wisely kept at home. But the most ancient as well as most authentic original records of the Grecian and Roman world are within our easy reach. Still there is not, I believe, in the United States, a reasonably complete series of these irrefragable documents of ancient history; her unambiguous foot-prints, — like those of the great birds in stone, — from which are made unerring inferences, and by which is settled what is doubtful or discordant in written documents, necessarily vitiated, more or less, in the process of copying.

Having many years ago studied this subject abroad with the aid of foreign collections, and having indeed formed a decent one of my own in barbarous regions, once seats of civilization, in part from the hands of the actual finders (myself a finder too), on my return I had the pleasure of making a descriptive list of the coins of the Salem East India Marine Society (afterwards printed, I think, in their catalogue). I was thus led to inquire what there was among us of the sort, and to become acquainted with most of the scanty collections in this vicinity. The Athenæum has made a fair beginning; and there is no reason why it should not go on, and soon have the finest Cabinet of Coins in the country, — *conveniently arranged for study*, — *for use.* The series in silver and copper might, at no great expense, be rendered nearly complete, without the coins of extraordinary rareness and consequent costliness. The value of such is often factitious, (virtuosos being prone to the foible of tulip and shell fanciers), as they have not necessarily greater intrinsic interest as to usefulness or beauty. Besides, the genuineness of well-preserved, not uncommon, coins is less liable to suspicion, and is easily determined by a practised eye; for their well-known abundance and cheapness make it no object for the most skilful counterfeiters to imitate them. Thus the Librarian, as Cabinet-keeper, though he need not be an Eckhel or a Sestini, should add to his other knowledge a tincture, at least, of *virtù.*

VI. If such, then, as I have described, is the appropriate office of a great Library in a city, which, like ours, is a centre of wide and elevating influence throughout a vast country, — and if such are the qualifications requisite in a person fit to administer it, — *he should receive a salary proportioned to the pay of other learned professions, and suitable for a scholar and a gentleman.* He should have an *honorable position*, should feel that, in the able discharge of his duties, something more than his bread is at stake, and should identify his *reputation* with the best interests of the institution. There is absurdity in saying, "Get your work done *cheap*, and buy the more books." The well-performed work of a Librarian worth having *brings* "more books:" he refunds his salary in part in this way.

If a great Library were about to be founded here *de novo* with one hundred thousand dollars, what intelligent person would hesitate to say, "An investment for the adequate pay of a suitable Librarian should take precedence of, or at least be simultaneous with, the first considerable investment in books"?

The Librarian should be in the counsels of the Trustees, except where it would affect his responsibility to them; should be encouraged to suggest as well as execute; should have aid enough to prevent a sacrifice of his higher functions to his lower; should have sympathy from the Trustees as well as oversight; and should be reckoned with at short intervals, for frequent quittances beget alacrity in carrying forward any work of responsibility.

VII. Having undertaken to utter my whole mind on this subject, as one of general interest, I will not be withheld, by any fear of being misapprehended, from expressing my settled conviction, that *now* is the time *to act* upon it. The Athenæum, before long, is to be transferred to a new edifice, and begin a new era. Whoever is to take proper charge of it there should have full opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted with it, in its details, as it is, — with what it has, and what it wants. He should prepare himself to superintend wisely its removal, and to afford, if it may be, valuable suggestions as to the interior arrangements of the new building, — a matter of the greatest prospective importance. It is natural to suppose that the Committee, on whom will rest the responsibility of preparing the new and permanent abode of the Athenæum, will be business-men, — gentlemen of more public spirit than leisure; and that they may be glad to have their gratuitous labors seconded, sometimes perhaps not a little relieved, by the aid of a competent person giving his whole time and thoughts to the business, and carrying out the details of what they decide upon.

Nor, as to worthy persons now employed in the Athenæum, would early action imply any harsh and violent breaking up of existing arrangements. It should be regarded as an easy and natural transition resulting from a change of circumstances. The institution is judged to have outgrown its vestments; new and better-fitting are provided, of course. To lay aside an *outgrown* garment casts no reflection on its past usefulness, nor upon its present value for other purposes.

I sat down, my dear Sir, to write you a letter, and it has swelled almost to a dissertation, — of an oddly variegated web, I confess. But I am sure of your indulgence for whatever there may be in it little to the purpose, if I have succeeded in giving shape to any views that may be turned to practical account for the real advancement of "The Boston Athenæum."

Truly your friend and servant,

CHARLES FOLSOM.

To Samuel A. Eliot, Esq.

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Boston, February 8, 1846.

Dear Folsom:

The Committee* met on Saturday evening with me. All estimate the importance of having a scholar competent to take charge of the Library. *All* think the appointment of such a person should not be delayed longer than necessary to provide funds for his support, and *all* agree that *you* are *the person* for the office.

A mode of providing the requisite income was suggested—that of inviting a general subscription—with express reference to this object—of $5 per annum, authorizing each subscriber to take out books. This regulation now exists, but only 160 or thereabouts avail themselves of it. If 400 can be induced to subscribe, it will furnish a large income for us. A special meeting of the whole Board of Trustees will be convened for Friday next, and the matter submitted to them.

Yours sincerely,

Wm. H PRESCOTT.

Charles Folsom, Esq.

*J. A. Lowell,
Dr. E. Hale,
W. H Prescott,
G. S. Hillard,
W. T. Andrews.

C

Boston, Saturday Morning.

My Dear Folsom:

The Trustees met with me last evening, at a *full board*,* and you were appointed Librarian of the Athenæum. The salary will be raised in the mode I before mentioned to you. The first year—in which Dr. Bass will remain as assistant—will, *probably, give you one thousand dollars—the next year fifteen hundred, and I trust this will be increased hereafter.* The mode of getting the subscriptions—which will be for five years—is referred to the former committee, and in the course of next week this will be arranged, and you will be expected to enter on the duties of your office immediately after.

This, of course, is no official communication to you.

Much obliged by the volume of the "Penny Cyclopedia," which I return. I find it worth more than a penny, having much information.

Yours, faithfully,

Wm. H. PRESCOTT.

Charles Folsom, Esq.

* Present, Messrs. Cary, J. A. Lowell, W. H. Prescott, Dr. E. Hale, W. T. Andrews, A. Binney, C. Amory, S. Austin, Dr. O. W. Holmes, G. S. Hillard, E. Wigglesworth. *Eleven.*

BOSTON ATHENÆUM.

At a meeting of the Trustees of the Boston Athenæum, held on the 12th day of January last, the undersigned were appointed a committee to consider whether any measures could be taken to increase the usefulness of the institution.

It is well known to you that the prospects of the Athenæum are now of the most encouraging description. A most eligible site has been obtained for the erection of a new building; and the land purchased in Tremont street for that object has been sold at a considerable advance. The generous donation of Mr. Bromfield will secure an annual increase to the library, and thus add essentially to the value of the shares. In view of these considerations, it has seemed highly desirable to the Trustees to make the literary treasures of the institution more available to the shareholders and the public, by putting them under the charge of some gentleman whose pursuits and attainments give him a peculiar fitness for the office of Librarian, enabling him, by his knowledge of books, to give symmetry and completeness to the collection, by supplying what is defective in each particular department, and to point out to the scholar the sources where he may most readily find the information of which he is in search.

The Trustees, therefore, have great satisfaction in stating that they have it in their power to secure in that capacity the services of Mr. Charles Folsom, a gentleman of various and accurate learning, and well acquainted with every department of bibliography, who for many years discharged the duties of Librarian in Harvard University, with great fidelity and ability. They esteem themselves very fortunate in being able to associate with the Athenæum a gentleman so singularly qualified for the office of Librarian, and who cannot fail *to administer its literary resources in such a manner as to add essentially to their value and usefulness.*

The appointment of Mr. Folsom to the office of Librarian will render it necessary that the available means within the control of the Trustees should be increased. They propose to do this by adding to the number of the annual subscriptions of five dollars each, paid by the proprietors for the right of taking out books from the Library. Of the whole number of proprietors, amounting to nearly five hundred, there are only one hundred and sixty who avail themselves of this privilege, thus yielding an income of eight hundred dollars. If only four hundred proprietors should make this annual payment it would increase our annual resources to two thousand dollars, and supply us with all the funds necessary for a thorough and efficient administration of the Library.

This amount will press very lightly upon each proprietor, and will confer upon him a valuable privilege—the right of taking out four volumes at a time from a numerous and excellent Library, which will hereafter receive a considerable annual increase from the donation of Mr. Bromfield. We have addressed this Circular to each proprietor, in order to increase the number of these annual subscriptions.

A person will call upon you in a few days to receive your answer to this communication.

JOHN A. LOWELL,
WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT,
ENOCH HALE,
WILLIAM T. ANDREWS,
GEORGE S. HILLARD.

Boston, March 3, 1846.

CAMBRIDGE, March 10, 1846.

DEAR SIR:

I have duly received your letter of this day, informing me that I was "last evening unanimously elected Librarian of the Boston Athenæum, for the ensuing year, by the Trustees of the Institution," and enclosing a letter from the President to the Assistant Librarian, which authorizes him to receive me in that capacity.

Be pleased to communicate to the Trustees my acceptance of the appointment, and to assure them that I am not insensible of the honor and responsibility which attach to it, and of the confidence which, on their part, it implies.

This confidence it will be my aim to justify, *enlightened and aided in the discharge of my duties by their countenance, direction, and support.*

Thanking you for your friendly assurances,

I am, dear sir, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

CHARLES FOLSOM.

HENRY T. PARKER, Esq.,
Secretary of the Boston Athenæum.

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Boston Athenæum, February 9, 1852.

To the Trustees of the Boston Athenæum:

Gentlemen:—When in the year 1846 I was invited by the Trustees of the Institution to take the office of Librarian, it was under circumstances peculiarly gratifying to my feelings. A circular letter was sent by the Trustees to each proprietor, stating the desirableness of securing my services, and making that a ground of appeal for increasing the income of the Athenæum. The gentlemen who were Trustees at that time (five of whom are still in your Board,) were eminently qualified to express an opinion on the general subject of a Librarian and the requirements of his place, however they might mistake as to the person they designated.

Before accepting the invitation, and to prevent misapprehension, I drew up a statement to be read by the Trustees, in which I fully set forth my views of the nature of the institution and of the duties of its Librarian, as a sort of *confession of faith*, should the matter ever have a personal relation to myself. I was naturally led to do this by the acknowledged fact, that, in the earlier periods of the institution, and while it was comparatively small, a Librarian in the proper sense of the word had not been judged necessary, most of the service that required literary qualifications having been performed personally and gratuitously by committees of the Trustees.

In my statement the following passages occurred:

"If such, then, as I have described, is the appropriate office of a great Library in a city, which, like ours, is a centre of wide and elevating influence throughout a vast country,—and if such are the qualifications of a person fit to administer it,—he should receive a salary proportioned to the pay of other learned professions, and suitable for a scholar and a gentleman. He should have an honorable position, should feel, in the discharge of his duties, that something more than his bread is at stake, and should identify his *reputation* with the best interests of the institution."

"The Librarian should be in the counsels of the Trustees, except where it would affect his responsibility to them; should be encouraged to suggest as well as to execute; should have aid enough to prevent a sacrifice of his higher functions to his lower; should have sympathy from the Trustees as well as oversight; and should be reckoned with at short intervals, for frequent quittances beget alacrity in carrying forward any work of responsibility."

"The Athenæum, before long, is to be transferred to a new edifice and begin a new era. Whoever is to take proper charge of it there should have full opportunity to become acquainted with it, in its details, as it is,—with what it has and what it wants.

He should prepare himself to superintend wisely its removal, and to afford, if it may be, valuable suggestions as to the interior arrangements of the new building, a matter of the greatest prospective importance. It is natural to suppose that the Committee on whom will rest the responsibility of preparing the new and permanent abode of the Athenæum, will be business men, gentlemen of more public spirit than leisure; and that they may be glad to have their gratuitous labors seconded, sometimes perhaps not a little relieved, by the aid of a competent person giving his whole time and thoughts to the business, and carrying out the details of what they have decided upon."

After this statement of my views, and before I entered upon the office, it was distinctly understood, that for the first year, while the former librarian was to remain as my assistant, I was to receive $1,000, the next year $1,500, and that afterwards the salary would be raised to a sum proportioned to the duties and responsibilities of *the office*, as compared with other professions in this community, requiring the same class of literary and moral qualifications. Agreeably to this understanding, the salary voted the second year was $1,500, and the salary of the first year was made up to the same sum. At that point it has remained. After the lapse of six years exclusively devoted to the institution, I now respectfully ask that the *Librarian's salary may be suitably increased.*

How successfully, during these six eventful years, I have performed the duties devolved on the Librarian (many of them novel, perplexing, and entirely out of the ordinary province of a Librarian,) others must judge; I can only speak of faithful endeavors; but that, on the whole, my course has been satisfactory to the Trustees and the Proprietors, I am bound to suppose, as *I have never had the slightest intimation to the contrary, from any committee or any individual of the Board.* I by no means suppose that the imperfections of my service have escaped their notice; but I mny be permitted to presume, that my efforts have been candidly judged in relation to the unusual difficulties of my situation, arising out of the transition state in which the Athenæum has been, during nearly the whole time of my connexion with it, and the inadequate number of my assistants.

But what, in its present more settled state, are the duties of the Librarian of the Institution,—an Institution which differs in important particulars, from any other in the counrry, with which it might naturally be compared, consisting of more departments more public in its character, more frequented, and by more classes of people. He is the custodian of property of various kinds amounting to above $300,000, and consisting of a vast number of particulars. He is the Steward to receive, and account for,

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moneys in numerous small sums, to collect all bills, and pay, when sanctioned, all current expenses. He is the superintendent of the whole establishment, the master of the house—the host. Nearly all the letters and notes, relating to all the business details of the Athenæum, are addressed to him, and must by him be answered. The Secretary's office is kept at the Athenæum, and all the business attaching to it, except writing the record of the meetings, comes under the Librarian's department. *Committees* may deliberate, direct, ratify; but the details of *acting* are mostly left with the Librarian, commonly from the necessity of the case, as he is supposed to be always present. I pass over the duties which are immediately connected with books, and which in many libraries are the sole duties,—I mean the receiving, collecting, entering them in various catalogues as they come in, and simply delivering and charging what are borrowed—and proceed to a branch of duty which has no settled limits and no regular times,—the receiving of visitors introduced by proprietors in person or by letter, strangers from all quarters of the land and from foreign lands, all of whom claim courteous treatment, and answers to their inquiries, whether general or about books. The families of proprietors, persons of both sexes, young and old, are to be made welcome, instructed in their rights, guided and sometimes, as to the young, restrained in their use of them. Especially is this the case with regard to the families of new proprietors who have been solicited to take shares, and have done so principally for the sake of their wives and children.

[Then followed oral remarks comparing the office with the College Librarian's, who has *vacations* (the Athenæum *none*) *fewer hours*, on *fewer days*, a single affair under Academic laws,—does not take his cares home, nor keep open evenings, nor Sundays.

Also compared city *school masters* and their pay, having their *vacations*, and six hours, turning their key on their cares when they leave school, &c. Is not the Librarian of the Athenæum's whole time worth as much, if he is fit for his post?]

G 13

Copy.

To the Trustees of the Boston Athenæum:

The Committee to whom was referred the communication of Charles Folsom, Esq., the Librarian of the Athenæum, ask leave to report,

That they have given to that communication their serious attention, as was due to *the great merits and services* of that officer; but they are *constrained* to express the opinion, which they have unanimously come to, that it would be inexpedient, in the present state of the finances of the institution, to increase the salary of the Librarian.

Which is respectfully submitted.

For the Committee,

[Signed] WILLIAM T. ANDREWS.

Boston, March 8th, 1852.

Committee.

Wm. T. Andrews,
J. Ingersoll Bowditch,
Samuel Hooper.

H

My Dear Sir,

While the late advance of your salary will enable you, I hope, to live, hereafter, with comfort and without incurring debt, I am aware that something more is necessary to secure to you the tranquillity that is important to the discharge of your duties as Librarian.

In order that you may be relieved from any private embarrassment that could distract your attention from the affairs of the Athenæum, I have suggested to some of your friends and *those of the institution*, that the sum *of one thousand dollars* should be *made up*, to *place you on the same footing as if the increase had taken place two years sooner.*

This has been done; and I have the pleasure to enclose you a check for this amount.

With earnest wishes for your domestic happiness,

I am, Dear Sir, very truly yours,

THOS. G. CAREY.

Boston, Jan. 27, 1854.

C. Folsom, Esq.

Cambridge, February 5, 1854.

My Dear Sir,

After my simple acknowledgment of the receipt from you of a check for One Thousand Dollars, permit me in the most earnest and grateful manner to express my thanks to you as having taken the lead, and to those gentlemen, who have coöperated with you, in this signal act of kindness; the benefit of which to me at this time is by no means to be estimated by even the largeness of the sum.

Time may disclose to me to what "personal friends and friends of the Athenæum," I owe this demonstration of friendship. Meanwhile I assure you, and I beg you to assure them, that I duly appreciate the motives which prompted you all, and the substantial, I may say vital, aid which you have so generously afforded me.

It is my hope, and it will continue to be my endeavor, while I am connected with the institution, to count its most enlightened friends among my personal friends by a necessary association; but at this moment I would lose every other thought and word in a *strictly personal* feeling and acknowledgment of my private obligations to yourself and your associates.

I reciprocate most heartily your kind wishes for my domestic happiness; and here perhaps I may have the advantage over you of more definiteness in the images that rise to my mind. But we are both of us husbands, and both fathers.

I am, my dear Sir, very sincerely yours,

CHARLES FOLSGM.

Hon. Thomas G. Cary.

Boston Athenæum,
23*d April*, 1855.

Gentlemen,

I have given to the question, you courteously proposed to me, the consideration which its importance demanded; and I respectfully answer, that I do not wish to withdraw from the office of Librarian of the Athenæum in its present circumstanees, but desire to be considered a candidate as in past years, though I cannot but regard as inadequate the compensation offered for the services and responsibility belonging to the place.

But whatever modification of the details of the office may be thought best for the institution, I would repeat what I said when first invited to accept it: "The confidence of the Trustees it will be my aim to justify, enlightened and aided in the discharge of my duties by their countenance, direction, and support."

Faithfully your obedient serv't,

CHARLES FOLSOM.

Andrew T. Hall, Esq.,
Martin Brimmer, Esq.,
Henry B. Rogers, Esq.,
} Committee of the Trustees.

At the Annual Meeting of the Proprietors of the Athenæum, a vote was passed, directing the Trustees to limit the expenses of the Institution within its actual income; and, at the first meeting of the Trustees held after that vote was passed, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to report how the wishes of the Proprietors could be effected.

The Committee have made a careful examination into the amount to be received the current year; and, basing the expenditures upon the experience of the past year, a continuance of these alone will involve the Institution in a debt of from ten to fifteen hundred dollars at its close. And here the Committee beg leave to remark, that, in their opinion, a further expenditure of from five to eight hundred dollars a year, for at least two years to come, is imperative, for the purpose of re-binding, repairing, and otherwise taking care of the books in the library. The whole amount of our income under favorable circumstances, to provide for the necessary wants of the Institution, is about $8,800. Therefore we are here met with the question of how are we to reduce our expenses? Our daily wants of fuel, light, printing, stationery, &c., &c., cannot be reduced, but in all probability, in the aggregate, will have to be increased,—leaving us nothing to recommend but a re-organization of the Librarian's department, the expenses of which are now about $4,100.

The Committee have been at some pains to ascertain what is done in other institutions of the same or similar character to ours, and find that the Astor Library, of New York, has one Librarian, two assistants, a young man, and a porter. The salaries paid them could not be ascertained; in this Library about 130 books are called for daily.

The New York Mercantile Library,—a very large establishment, with an average issue to its members of 10,000 books per month, or 120,000 per year, have

1 principal Librarian, whose salary is - - -	$1,500
1 Assistant, " " " - - -	700
1 2d Assistant & Collector, " " - - -	600
2 Boys at $100 each, - - - - - -	200

A young man who takes charge of the Reading Room, said to be the largest in the country, at a salary of $250,—making in all $3,250 per year.

The New York Society's Library, whose business it is thought is about the same as ours, has

1 Librarian, with a salary of - - - -	$900
1 Boy, " " - - - -	125
1 Porter, " " - - - - -	250
In all, - - - - - - -	$1,275

Our own City Library, who issue from 3 to 600 Books per day, and, of course, receive about the same number, pay

The Librarian, - - - - - - - -	$1,000
2 Assistants $500 each, - - - - -	1,000
4 Female Assistants $250, - - - - -	1,000
In all, - - - - - - - -	$3,000

The Trustees will thus perceive that these kindred institutions are managed, relatively, at an expense much less than ours; therefore, with these comparisons before them, and the *absolute necessity* of a reduction of our expenses, the Committee recommend that from and after the 1st of April next, if arrangements can as soon be made, the Athenæum shall employ a Librarian whose whole time shall be given to the institution, for a salary of - - - - - - - - $1,000

Also 2 Female Assistants at $250, - -	500
A Porter or Janitor, in full for all labor of collecting and other services, - - - - - -	500
Making in all the sum for salaries of these officers,	$2,000

The Committee here desire to be distinctly understood, that, in coming to this decision, they have but one object in view, —that is to pay our officers all that we possibly can afford to pay them, with the limited means placed in our charge. We wish we could pay higher salaries, but unless more means are given us for this puspose, *necessity* compels the adoption of the abovenamed sums.

Respectfully submitted by

[Signed] AND. T. HALL,
M. BRIMMER,
HENRY B. ROGERS.

Present salaries:

Mr. Folsom, - - - - - - - -	$2,000
Mr. Abbott, - - - - - - - -	750
Mr. Noyes, - - - - - - - -	340
Mr. Arnold, - - - - - - - -	468
Mr. Lyons, - - - - - - - -	520
	$4,078

Boston, May 11, 1855.

To the Trustees of the Boston Athenæum:

Gentlemen,—A considerable number of Shareholders in the Athenæum had prepared the accompanying paper, to be presented for signature to other Shareholders who were supposed to entertain the same opinions. Upon consideration and consultation, however, it was not thought expedient to appear to give by an array of numbers any weight to the representation which it might not intrinsically possess.

It is therefore, very respectfully submitted to your Board for consideration unsigned, as the expression of views to which we doubt not you will give all the attention they deserve, independently of the names of any subscribers.

Very respectfully,
Your obedient servants,

CHARLES G. LORING,
FRANKLIN DEXTER,
SAM'L. A. ELIOT,
W. H. GARDINER.

To the Trustees of the Boston Athenæum:

The undersigned, owners of Shares in the Athenæum, have seen a report made by a Committee, and accepted by your board, recommending that the expenses of the Librarian's department be reduced from $4,078 to $2,000, by fixing the salary of the principal Librarian at $1,000 instead of $2,000; that of the janitor at $500 instead of $520; and substituting for the three other persons employed now at an aggregate expense of $1,558, two female assistants at $250 each. The Committee place this reduction on the ground of absolute pecuniary necessity; stating the income of the Athenæum to be, in favorable years, about $8,800, and that, according to the

experience of the past year, the expenses will exceed that sum by from $1,000 to $1,500; besides an additional expenditure required of from $500 to $800 a year for at least two years, for repairing the books.

We do not propose to controvert the accuracy of these statements of income and expense; but, assuming the deficiency of the income to meet the current expenses of last year at the medium statement of the Committee, viz: $1,250, we think that the sum of $410.15 for iron shelving, may fairly be deducted from those current expenses, as being an item of construction and not of repair; and that the sum of $477.25 for extra labor on the catalogue might well be saved, even if we suspend that work in its present slow progress; these two items would reduce the deficiency to $362.60.

The sum of $1,774.09 included in last year's expenses, for buying and binding books, might, we think, be sufficient to meet the cost of repairing books, (estimated by the Committee at from $500 to $800 a year, for two years), and yet leave enough for the purpose of buying books for the present, considering that we have the available income of the Bromfield and Appleton funds (together about $52,000), devoted to that object.

If the deficiency can thus be reduced for the next year to $362.60, and if we take into view that about $23,000, the balance of the subscription of 1853, will become payable, and may be made productive, in one or two years from last January, giving us $600 additional income next year, and $1,200 the following years, we think that a present reduction of $1,000 in the whole expenses of the Librarian's department, (instead of $2,000, as proposed by the Committee), would be all that our necessities require; as it would leave us this year $648, next $1,248, and after that $1,848 to meet contingencies of repairs, construction, catalogue, &c., &c.

This reduction might be made by paying the following salaries, viz:

Principal Librarian, - - - - - - -	$1,500
Assistant Librarian, - - - - - - -	800
One intelligent youth, (or female, if thought best, though many object to it), - - - -	250
Janitor—including collecting and out-of-door work, as well as care of the interior, - - - -	500
	$3,050

A saving of $1,020 on present salaries.

By this change in the plan of the Committee, Mr. Folsom's continuance in the office of Librarian could be secured, as we are informed; but, if the salary be reduced to $1,000, we do not think it practicable to obtain the permanent services of any person, such as the duties and responsibilities of the office, and the reputation of the Institution, require. With these views of the practicability of paying the salaries above named, without exceeding our income, we most respectfully request of the Trustees not to make so great a change in the Librarian's department as that proposed in the Report, and for the following reasons:

1st. That we have many very valuable Paintings, Works of Sculpture, Engravings, and costly Books, which do not go into circulation, but which are used for reference, and examined as objects of curiosity; all of which require for their preservation a care and supervision which cannot be given by a Librarian who has to superintend constantly the delivery, receipt, and recording of circulating books, aided only by two female assistants.

2d. We consider the Athenæum, though private property, yet, in its nature and effect, a public Institution; and one that, for the credit of the City, should be represented to strangers by a scholar and a learned man, versed in several modern languages, such as Mr. Folsom unquestionably is, as well as distinguished for his kind and courteous manners.

3d. We believe it to be impossible to procure such a man as a permanent officer for a salary of $1,000.

4th. We think there should always be a competent and responsible Sub-Librarian, to meet the case of the necessary absence or sickness of the Principal, which could not properly be supplied by females or boys at a salary of $250.

5th. We think that Mr. Folsom's services for the last ten years, (from his age of 50 to that of 60), have been such as respects fidelity and devotion to the interests of the Institution, and a constant courtesy to Proprietors and Visitors, and such is the confidence justly reposed in him for his high and irreproachable moral character, that it would seem hard if not ungrateful, for a difference of only $500 a year, to adopt (without an extreme necessity, which we do not perceive), a measure which would be in effect to discharge him, at an age when he can hardly be expected to find any new occupation for the support of his family.

6th. We believe too, that the expected permanency of Mr. Folsom's position was among the motives which influenced more or less of the subscriptions intended to place the Athenæum on an independent footing.

Boston, May 1, 1855.

Boston, *May* 12*th*, 1855.

Charles Folsom, Esq.,

My dear Sir: I duly received your favor of the 23d ultimo; and, as at the meeting of the Trustees on Monday, the Committee will make known your wishes to retain the office of Librarian of the Athenæum, I now address you for the purpose of asking: Will you, if elected, exert your best energies in endeavoring to carry into effect the plan recommended in the late report of the Committee, as to the mode of carrying on the Library, so that that plan may have a fair trial? as upon the answer to this question, the result of the election may turn. I shall be obliged by your reply before the hour of meeting on Monday,

And am truly yours,

ANDREW T. HALL,
Chairman of the Committee.

Boston Athenæum,
May 14, 1855.

My dear Sir,

By my letter of the 23d ultimo, I meant it to be understood that, while I am Librarian of the Athenæum, it will be my earnest endeavor to carry out, under the direction of the Trustees, any plan of administration they may desire. Specifically, as to the plan recommended in the late report of the Committee, I would now say, in reply to your question in your note of the 12th instant, that it shall have, at my hands, as fair a trial as if it had originated with myself,—always supposing that the Trustees will hold frequent intercourse with me, and thus be able to form a candid judgment for themselves, both of my efforts, and of the working of the plan, which, in seeking the good of the institution, they wish to have faithfully tried.

Very truly yours,

C. FOLSOM, *Librarian.*

Andrew T. Hall, Esq.,
Chairman of the Committee.

Boston, *May* 15, 1855.

Charles Folsom, Esq.,

Dear Sir: I suppose it is an unnecessary favor for me to announce to you your election as Librarian of the Athenæum for the current year. But I beg leave to call your attention to the record as it stands, for yesterday's meeting.

Please to send to me the book of records of visitors of the Lowell Fund.

Yours respectfully,

HENRY M. PARKER, *Secretary, &c.*

BOSTON, MAY 21st, 1855.

GENTLEMEN :—

A letter which you recently addressed to the Trustees of the Boston Athenæum, in reference to the choice of Mr. Folsom as librarian, induces me to state to you some facts which a a passage in that letter, with the conclusion to which it might tend, may oblige me, as a matter of duty, to state in a more public manner hereafter; being myself the only person now connected with the management of the Athenæum who was so at the time of his engagement, I speak only for myself, with no authority to represent the Trustees. The passage is that in which it is urged that, having had his services from the age of fifty years to sixty, the Trustees are bound in "gratitude" to re-elect him, and of course, it would seem, to continue him indefinitely in the office.

Mr. Folsom was not asked to take charge of the Athenæum, but applied for the place. He had not succeeded in what he had previously undertaken, the management of the "University Press," and afterwards in that of a school. He had failed in both, under circumstances very favorable to success, and, as is generally known and freely admitted by those who are as intimate with him and as partial to him, probably, as any of his friends, failed from want of qualities which are necessary in conducting any public institution.

As the librarian then had a salary of only $500, it was necessary, with the expectations that Mr. F. appeared to have formed when seeking the appointment, to explain to him clearly that there was no fund from which a salary could be paid him, such as he would need, and I made the explanation to him personally. He had heard of the donation of $25,000 from Mr. Bromfield, and of a subscription of $75,000, and supposed that there were abundant means. But the first was exclusively appropriated to the purchase of books, and the second to a new building. A mode was pointed out by which, if his friends should make some exertion, means might be provided to pay him $1,200 or $1,500 a year; but nothing effectual was done. The Trustees concluded, after some weeks of consideration, however, that in one view of the case, they might be justified in paying him a salary of $1,000, until the library should be transferred to the new building, as an extra expense incidental to the removal; and he was accordingly chosen, with a view to the preparation of a catalogue while the removal was in progress.

His predecessor, Dr. Bass, was displaced to make room for him, after being more than twenty years in the service of the Athenæum, and with reason to consider his place permanent, which Mr. Folsom has not had. His manner of discharging the

duties of librarian was in the main approved, and, though some dissatisfaction was expressed concerning him, the expressions were not stronger than I have officially known to be applied to Mr. Folsom, since then, by persons who well understood the subjects on which they complained. Although Dr. B.'s case was such as might excite sympathy somewhat akin to the gratitude of which you now speak, he was removed as a matter of expediency, for the supposed interest of the Athenæum, with a distinct understanding that it was to be so on the part of Mr. Folsom, who only remarked, as to that matter, that Dr. B. must submit to the change which new circumstances required.

There is reason founded on remarks from a quarter where there is sound judgment in regard to the arrangement of books and the kindest feeling towards Mr. Folsom, to believe, that if Dr. B. had received the efficient assistance that was provided for Mr. F., the removal would have been made as well under him as it was in fact made. For, though Mr. Folsom (with perfectly honest intentions I have no doubt,) held out the expectation that in his preparations to remove book by book, he should make important progress towards the completion of a catalogue, those expectations have been lamentably disappointed.

It will be said, perhaps, that the catalogue is not, after all, so important as some of us suppose. If that be true, then the Trustees, innocently misled by him, acted, as well as himself, under a mistake when he was chosen, a mistake which proved expensive to the institution.

After the first year, Mr. Folsom represented to the Trustees that he could not subsist on $1,000 a year, and his salary was raised to $1,500. The removal of the library was retarded for some years by changes of plan and delays in completing the building. Some time after it was effected, Mr. F. applied for an increase of salary. The Trustees had not the funds at their command necessary to comply with his request. Considerable changes had taken place in the board, and, as it was necessary to explain to new members what had been the history of his engagement, I stated it substantially as I have here given it. The request could not be complied with, and I personally communicated the result to him, repeating to him nearly what I had said to the Trustees. On one occasion about that time, the Trustees did not, as usual, re-elect him at the commencement of the year, because they were in doubt whether they should have means to pay him, and because it might be necessary to dispense with his services altogether, perhaps to close the Athenæum. In all this uncertainty he had abundant warning that his continuance in the situation was quite uncertain, so that it would have been unwise in him not to engage in any other occupation if he had the opportunity and the ability to do so.

The idea, therefore, that he has been in any way sacrificing

himself to the institution, or that it has incurred any debt of "gratitude" to him, seems to be a mistake. He has had such salary as it had to give; the utmost. He was very glad to receive it, having nothing better to do; and the estimation in which he is now held, even by those of the Trustees who have just now been most inclined to re-elect him, taking their praises with admissions which cannot be avoided, shows that the expectations with which he was first engaged, have not been met.

But, if this view of the matter be erroneous, it is certainly proper that the attention of the proprietors should be called to the subject soon, that it may be considered in all its bearings, and the obligations to Mr. Folsom, if there be any, discharged by the payment of a specific sum, rather than that the Trustees, whoever they may be hereafter, should be harassed by the supposition, urged upon them by gentlemen of your influence, that they are not at liberty to make any change of librarian, if they think it best for the institution, that the annual choice is now an empty form, and that he holds the place for life.

I do not propose a reference of the matter to the proprietors, but I respectfully suggest that it is very likely to follow from such urgency on the part of his friends. Claiming, too, to be myself as active a friend, if not as partial a one, as he has, (of which I can, if it appears to me necessary, show substantial proof,) I add that such reference would be detrimental to him, as I know officially from proprietors of so great influence that without their countenance the attempt, even, to raise the fund which enables us to retain him at all, would never have been made.

Of this fund of $120,000, only the income of $25,000 is applied to the purchase of books, and that is used only because it is placed beyond reach for any other purpose by the caution of Mr. Appleton's trustees. But it is expected of the Trustees of the Athenæum that they will apply more to the increase of the library, by saving something from the remainder of the income, in the restriction of general expenses, instead of calculating only to make the two ends meet. The books being used like those of a circulating library, for income, suffer damage, and are deplorably in want of repairs in binding. The care of the building, too, is made prominent, by the terms of subscription, among the objects for which the fund is held in trust; and though repairs may not be required every year, there should be

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a reservation of several hundred dollars annually for emergencies. These considerations led several gentlemen, who had been foremost in contributing to the fund, to protest, at the close of the year before the last, against any increase of salaries; and it seemed to be unfortunate for Mr. F. that an influence, beginning perhaps outside of the board, induced the trustees to disregard such objections, and thus open the way to elicit such a recital of facts as this. While it seemed to some that the consequence of completing the fund was, of course, to be an increase of his salary, I thought that we had gained a point with which all had better rest satisfied in securing the means to pay the salary as it was; which could not have been done much longer without aid.

It has now been suggested that some person having property of his own, yet being desirous of some occupation with a moderate addition of income, might be found who would readily take the place of librarian, and could well afford to do so at a salary of $1,000. Two persons with such property are known to the trustees, who are said on good authority, to be eminently fitted for the place in the qualities that you deem important. But if the proprietors are so bound by what has heretofore been done with regard to Mr. Folsom, that their trustees are not at liberty to engage either of them, if they see fit to do so, or to make any other change without first providing such a salary for Mr. F. as some of his friends think suitable for his subsistence, I repeat that the proprietors ought to have a full statement of the grounds for such a supposition. I know from personal assurance, that among the opponents of such an idea there would be found some of the best of his friends; and I have similar reason to believe, that if the paper which you sent to the trustees without signatures, had been circulated for the purpose of obtaining them, with any clear statement of its bearing and purpose, it would have seemed less remarkable for the names appearing on it, than for those found to be wanting there.

It is unquestionably true, as I have stated, that Mr. Folsom could not have been elected at first, had it not been for sanguine expectations among the trustees, encouraged by him through me, which he has failed to fulfil. Those expectations formed the only ground on which any member of the board attempted to justify his election, with the slender resources then at command; and, if subsequent experience in regard to them had been foreseen, he would not have been elected then, nor probably at any time. Acting without reference to them, the trustees could have saved a considerable portion of his salary when it was greatly needed, in the aggregate a large sum.

While it is the purpose of this letter to state facts merely, rather than to offer my opinions, perhaps a conviction, forced upon me by long association with him, may be regarded somewhat as a fact. It is, that although it would be desireble to the presiding officer in such an institution to find the librarian, as Mr. Folsom was supposed to be, so deserving of entire confidence in point of judgment and attention that the trustees need only take his advice and simply make such regulations as he might recommend, my successor in office, whoever he may be, will find, so long as Mr. F. remains, that the most difficult duty for him to perform is the selection of such a committee on the library as will take pains to see that the duties of the librarian are discharged as they should be.

The committee whose report you have examined was carefully selected, consisting of gentlemen who had each of them recently given efficient proof of interest in the welfare of Mr. Folsom, and of their readiness to aid him. In regard to two members of the board who have shown a strong bias in favor of retaining him, it is best, perhaps, that you should know that they were omitted in the selection of the committee at their own particular request, previously made to the chair.

I think that the facts here stated should be made known to some gentlemen who, without being aware of them, but seeming to act in concert with you, have, I understand, pressed their views upon trustees with a degree of warmth, indicating a belief that the propriety of electing Mr. Folsom, with such salary as he needs, could not be questioned on any ground.

I have only to add that his conduct towards me personally has always been such as I could desire.

I am, gentlemen,

Respectfully yours,

THOS. G. CARY.

To

CHARLES G. LORING,
F. DEXTER,
S. A. ELIOT,
W. H. GARDINER,
} *Esquires.*

Boston Athenæum,
9 *June*, 1855.

Dear Sir:

I have duly received your letter of May 15th, communicating the action of the Trustees of the Athenæum at their last meeting, by which I was elected Librarian for the present year, on the terms expressed in the following vote:

At a meeting of the Trustees of the Boston Athenæum, held on Monday, the 14th of May, 1855, it was

"Voted, that the Board proceed to the choice of a Librarian to receive a salary of Twelve Hundred Dollars per annum, who shall appoint an assistant Librarian with a salary of Eight Hundred Dollars, and a Janitor with a salary of Five Hundred Dollars, said appointments to be subject to the approbation of the Committee on the Library.

"The Trustees then balloted for a Librarian. Charles Folsom was declared elected for the present year, 1855."

Be pleased to communicate to the Board my acceptance of the appointment with which they have honored me, as well as the appointments I have proceeded to make, of Mr. Ezra Abbott, Jr., as assistant Librarian, and Mr. Timothy Lyons as Janitor, subject to the approval of the Library Committee.

Respectfully yours,
CHARLES FOLSOM.

Henry M. Parker, Esq.,
Secretary of the Athenæum.

Boston, June 11, 1855.

To the President of the Boston Athenæum.

I protest against the attempt made on the fourteenth day of last May, by the Board of Trustees of the Boston Athenænm, or by some of them, to change the prospective salaries of the librarian of the Boston Athenæum and his coadjutors; and I protest against all acts of said board which are consequent on, and in conformity to, said attempt. I wish this to be entered on the journal of said board; for the following and other reasons.

Firstly; I dissent from said proceedings, because I believe that said board of trustees had no legal right at their meeting on said May, to reconsider the votes which this board passed on the twentieth day of last March, after due notice and full deliberation, by which it regulated the prospective salaries of said librarian and his coadjutors; which may be made to appear thus: Our common parliamentary law was derived from England, and is the same as the English law, excepting modifications which adapt it to different circumstances, and excepting changes which have been made by assemblies in this country by their establishing different rules. The English parliamentary law does not allow reconsidering votes; therefore, reconsidering here can only be done by some rule which has been introduced into the law derived from England. This board of trustees not having established any rule for reconsidering, could only reconsider under some rule which is common here. Many assemblies in this country have established rules for their government, which allow votes to be reconsidered if the motion for reconsideration be made on the same or next following day of session after the voting which it relates to; and these rules usually contain some other limitations. But the common rules established in this State, do not authorize reconsidering without the motion for reconsideration being made in the time above specified. The motion for said attempted reconsideration on the fourteenth of last May, was not made in the time above specified. Therefore, this vote of reconsideration, and said board's proceedings under it, seem to be void. I do not recollect an instance of any assembly establishing a rule for its reconsidering, which authorized such proceedings as the proceedings on this subject in last May. The assertion which some people have made, without giving any proof, that a mere majority of the part of any board which composes any legal meeting, may, if not prohibited by any rule of its own establishing, reconsider to any extent, seems not to have any foundation.

Secondly; I dissent from said proceedings, because I believe that said board should try some means for reducing the expenses of the Athenæum to its revenue; though it may be attended with the discontinuance of the service of an accomplished gentleman of surpassing suavity; not merely because the Proprietors, at their last meeting, requested or instructed the trustees to confine the expenses within the receipts; but because the cost of attending to the library and reading-room during the time the present librarian has been its incumbent, seems to have been about twice as much per quantity of service, as this insti-

tution paid some years next previous to his being its librarian; and about twice as much as other institutions have paid per quantity of similar service during the time he has been its librarian.

Thirdly; I dissent from said proceedings, because I believe that if the trustees cannot conform to said request or direction of the proprietors without doing what the Proprietors will disapprove, it is more proper for the trustees to give the Proprietors notice of it, and request their further action, at a meeting of them, than for the trustees to proceed in opposition to the request or direction they have received.

URIAH A. BOYDEN.

Boston Athenæum,
July 16, 1855.

To the Library Committee and the Standing Committee.

Gentlemen, — As the administration of the Athenæum is placed under your direction and oversight, the Librarian, in entering upon a new quarter, under circumstances somewhat modified, would respectfully seek from you instructions in certain particulars, to which he may appeal for his guidance in the discharge of his duties, and for his justification when questions arise.

I. As to the *hours* of strict attendance: 1. Of the Librarian; 2. Of the Assistant-Librarian; 3. Of the Janitor.

II. As to the official relation of the Librarian to his subordinates; *i. e.*, whether the natural and usual principles of subordination hold, by which the chief is directly responsible in the first instance to *his* superiors, and the subordinates are directed by and amenable in the first instance to him.

III. As to the general spirit of the institution, as affecting its administration; and whether the Librarian is judged to have rightly conceived of it hitherto.

IV. As to any new views which the Committees may have to suggest for the better ordering of the administration of the Athenæum under its present circumstances.

The above heads will probably suggest such instructions as may be sufficient for the present quarter, and as will give confidence to, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

C. FOLSOM,
Librarian.

Boston Athenæum,
July 16, 1855.

Charles Folsom, Esq., *Librarian.*

Dear Sir, — At a meeting of the Library Committee this day (the Chairman of the Standing Committee being present, and acting with them), your communication of this date was read and considered; whereupon it was unanimously voted, —

I. The "hours of strict attendance" of the Librarian shall be from ten o'clock, a.m., until four o'clock, p.m.; of the Assistant-Librarian, from nine o'clock, a.m, until six o'clock, p.m., with an intermission of an hour and a half, at such time as the Librarian may fix. The time and general duties of the Janitor shall be regulated by the Librarian.

II. The Librarian being responsible, in the first instance, for the proper administration of the Library, all the subordinates will receive their instructions from him, and be amenable to him for the proper discharge of their duties.

III. The general spirit of the institution, as affecting its administration, is judged by the Committees to have been rightly conceived of hitherto; and they desire the Librarian to pursue substantially the same course as heretofore, subject to such alterations as may be proposed from time to time by the Committees. Any new measures that may be deemed for the interests of the Athenæum will be communicated to the Librarian, when they have been passed upon and adopted by the proper authorities.

The Library Committee will, until further notice, hold regular meetings every Monday afternoon; at which time the Librarian is requested to report the accessions to the Library, the calls for books not now owned by the Athenæum, the number of books catalogued, and any thing else that has occurred pertaining to the administration and wants of the Library.

Yours respectfully,

GEO. LIVERMORE,
Chairman of the Library Committee.

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